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Boulevard Planning Group
(Unapproved) MINUTES/SUMMARY, May 7, 2009
Boulevard Community Center, 39919 Highway 94/Ribbonwood

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
AND LAND USE

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Members present: Darlene Koczka, Chris Noland, Bill Parsons, and Donna Tisdale (Chair). Absent: Cheryl Lenz (excused), Jeffrey McKernan (excused), and Pat Stuart (excused).

1) MINUTES: M/S Parsons/Noland to accept the April 2 minutes as presented. Passed: 4-0-0.

2) CORRESPONDENCE: The Group has received: **A)** updates on General Plan Zoning Ordinance Amendment; Fair Housing Requirements; On April 24th, the Planning Commission had a meeting on access requirements for wildfires that dealt with the "dead end" road regulations similar to what the sub-division on Shasta Way has had problems with the secondary access; **B)** streamlined regulations regarding secondary accessory dwelling units - single story; the Revisions to Existing Planning Commission Policy PC2 - pertaining to procedure rules for conducting hearings that relate to time lines for submissions of writings to the Planning Commission and clarifications on continuances and public notices requirements; Public Road Standards that are trying to get some uniform standards; **C)** we also received a notice from Valley Center that says "flexible road standards are critical for your community too". The notice shows pictures of "before" and "after" of their rural road that is now a 4-lane road that took out all of their trees and changed their Community Character. Valley Center is asking all Planning Groups to participate in the Workshop that the County is organizing for flexible road standards so that not all roads are the same - allowing rural and urban standards. The Chair indicated that no dates have been set for this Workshop but encouraged the Planners to attend if they are available when the dates are announced. **D)** At the Board of Supervisors meeting of April 22, there was an authorization to accept 7 million dollars in Federal Grants for Hazardous Fuels Reductions: "The County has a deep commitment to safeguarding lives and property from wildfires. On June 16th, 2004 the Board established the Fire Safety and Fuels Reduction Program to resourcefully and effectively implement a comprehensive program to complete over 47 million dollars in fuels reduction activities."

3) NEW BUSINESS:

A. LANDSCAPE WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE (POD-08-0160): This item is for information only. The proposed amendment was directed by the Board of Supervisors(BOS) to investigate options to make the Landscape Ordinance more water-wise and fire-wise. State law requires the County to adopt the State law or one that is effective in conserving water. To view the proposed text of the State model ordinance go to <http://www.owue.water.ca.gov/docs/finalregulation.pdf>. Comments are due May 5th to Dixie.Switzer@sdcounty.ca.gov. A Planning Commission hearing is planned for 5/22 and the BOS on 6/4.

B. ADDRESS CLOSING OF RURAL BIN SITES AND RELATED IMPACTS: Planner Noland reported that all of the rural bin sites have now been closed - this includes Campo and Descanso. Trash now has to be taken to Ramona or Santee. There is some information that the Ramona Landfill will be closed as well. Planner Noland said he would like to send a letter to Supervisor Jacob protesting this problem and asked for the Group's approval.

M/S Parsons/Koczka: To approve Noland's request to write a letter on behalf of the Group to Supervisor Dianne Jacob and the Board of Supervisors protesting the closure of the rural bin sites and requesting that they come up with a solution to this public health threat. Passed: 4-0-0.

4. OLD BUSINESS - UPDATES - POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS:**A. GENERAL PLAN UPDATE:**

The Chair reported that County staff is being fairly supportive of the Steering Committee (Chairs of the elected Planning/Sponsor Groups throughout the County). And consistently the Planning Groups have voted to protect their Community Character and keep it distinct, they don't want over-development, they want to have control. County Staff has been supportive of the Community Character role, but they have received a lot of pressure from interest group (which is made up mostly with developers and big environmental groups that want to protect open space) on sub-divisions and they keep coming back with "new" names. Instead of calling it clustering, they now call it conservation sub-divisions. They are now talking about allowing the same number of houses on a piece of property, but cramming them all into one little corner and leaving the rest open space.

Planner Noland (Professional Hydrologist) reported that the County now wants to use "basins" for their studies regarding the Ground Water Ordinance within the Conservation Sub-division Program. They want to use the term "basin" to determine how much water is going to be available for a certain project or a sub-division. Noland read aloud the comments he provided to the Chair on the Conservation Subdivision: "The use of the term "basin" within the Ordinance refers to a geographic area that is based on topography. What is known about ground water in fractured rock environments is that regional ground water may not be isolated within basins. Ground water extraction activities in one basin may affect an adjacent basin since fractured rock aquifers are not always confined to the basin they are within." This situation is found out here with the projects like Rancho Finistierra and the affects from the Golden Acorn. Basins don't mean very much out here in the Boulevard area. Noland agrees with the County that "ground water investigation for developments that occur near boundary's of basins should require the Director to evaluate adjacent basins". The residential well test section just mentioned "quantity", it didn't include any parameters for "quality" - including nitrates, radio nuclides which are typical problems that are stopping subdivisions up here. This information should be listed on the ground water limitations map - which is currently based solely on rainfall rather than ground water quality. Lastly, the Director stated in the Ground Water Ordinance that he may grant an exemption from the requirement of a ground water investigation. Noland believes that the Director should have the concurrence of the County Ground Water Geologist or other appropriately licensed individual for any exemptions based on existing data.

Chair Tisdale said that Saturday's 3-hour meeting ended with the agreement to add in lot size recommendations commencing at Section 42: It shall not apply in a planned development, provided however, that all (added) lots comply with Community Plans and required findings. The Group agreed that we should use limited 11 acres as a minimum lot size for your Community Plan to be tied in to the Ground Water Limitation Map for Conservation Subdivisions with no lot averaging.. In order to have our final revisions to our Community Plan completed and submitted to the County by the deadline of May 30th, the Group will need to have a second meeting this month. **May 28th, Thursday, 7 pm. was the selected date.**

B. OUTDOOR WORLD / HORIZON CELL SITE (P08-014): Chair Tisdale has received a copy of a letter from the County requesting more information from the applicant. They say they are in compliance with most of their requirements but they need a check list and more information on alternative sites and they are asking for better camouflaging as well. The County is working with them. At the March meeting, the Planning Group voted to reject the water tank proposal which looked too much like a guard tower in a prison camp. The request for a

more vintage water tank or faux boulder camouflage was repeated. A replacement map dated 3/23 has been received with a response requested.

C. SDG&E'S PLANS TO SHUT-OFF POWER TO RURAL COMMUNITIES IN HIGH WIND EVENTS:

There was a California Public Utilities Commission public hearing on April 7 at the Alpine Community Center that had a couple of hundred in attendance. The reason SDG&E is considering shutting us off is because they haven't done maintenance out here.

D. SUNRISE POWERLINK / BLM AND OTHER ISSUES:

The Town Hall meeting held April 6 at the Alpine Community Center for Sunrise Powerlink had about 5-600 opponents in attendance. The new group called the East County Community Action Coalition has good information on their website: www.EastCountyAction.org. An injunction has been requested. The Forest Department has to do a Plan Amendment for the Sunrise Powerlink and we are asking for public hearings and an environmental impact statement. Congressman Hunter is against the Powerlink and is working with us on this.

E. IBERDROLA RENEWABLES \$400 MILLION TULE WIND PROJECT PROPOSED FOR MCCAIN VALLEY: They have submitted their Plan of Development to the Bureau of Land Management(BLM), but it is not available to the public yet. It is still, supposedly, in draft stage and BLM is working with them on it.

F. SDG&E'S ECO SUBSTATION AND NEW TRANSMISSION LINE FOR WIND GENERATION

PROJECTS: According to the SDG&E representatives tonight, this project is now up to 500 mg - which could compute to 250 turbines.

G. SEMPRA'S PRESIDENTIAL PERMIT APPLICATION FOR 500 KV CROSS-BORDER LINE AT

JACUMBA: Representatives from SEMPRA have requested to be on our June Agenda to discuss the Sierra Juarez Project. They will also be in Jacumba on May 26th to discuss this project with that community first.

H. PROPOSED CAMPO LANDFILL:

The Supplemental EIS is still pending release for public comment with early-mid June now being the earliest projected date. Congressman Hunter has written a letter to both the U.S. Geological Survey and the International Boundary and Water Commission asking them to comment on the project.

I. LANSING AND HAMANN COMPANIES: No new information. The Chair has asked Lansing if SDG&E has requested any agreements on starting to work on his property since the route goes across it. No response yet.

J. INVENERGY WIND: They are lobbying heavily at the County because they want allow industrial wind on private property here in Boulevard. Also, the County was able to obtain the money to revise the Turbine Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors voted to do that with the MET towers. That public environmental review process will be scheduled for sometime in the future.

K. MULTIPLE SPECIES CONSERVATION PLAN: No new information at this time.

5. PRESENTATION FROM THE FLOOR ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: SDG&E had several representatives

show up unannounced at this meeting (JC Thomas and Gary Weims-Project Manager for the East County Substation Project and the Boulevard Re-build Project). Mr. Weims indicated that they were ready to file on April 13th but had received word from their Transmission Planning Group that there were additional potential generation projects in the Boulevard area. The Indian Reservation is looking into speculative wind projects. With the 69 line that we had designed for Boulevard down to the East County - it wasn't enough to handle the generation that is potentially out there. The line has now been increased to 138kv. That does nothing to the design of the structures. The physical changes to the project scope are only at the Boulevard Substation. As designed, the Boulevard Substation was one acre. It will be increased in size to approx. 2 acres. It will be a low-profile substation now. The 138kv facilities are shorter than if they installed an open-rack system (a big steel structure standing 40 feet tall). The 138kv structure should be 12-15 feet tall. The new file date with all of the changes will probably be at the end of June. Mr. Weims said that they plan on building the new substation closer to the road in order to save as many Oak trees as possible. He acknowledged that some Oaks will be removed along with Mary Schoepfer's residence. The transmission line that is the first span from the substation out to the pole will be underground for approx. 100 feet. Planner Parsons asked when the new metal pole exchange is scheduled for Boulevard. Mr. Thomas didn't think anything is scheduled for the next year because SDG&E is trying to get into the extreme high-fire risk areas first. Thomas stated that Boulevard is just on the fringe of the fire risk area which conflicts with their stated reasons and plans to shut-off power in the area during high wind events. Metal poles will be 8-10 feet taller than existing wooden poles. They want to wait to swap out the poles and de-energize the existing 69 kv line until after the new substation is in place. Chair Tisdale asked why SDG&E didn't request to be listed as an Agenda item so that the community would know they would be here and could answer questions. The response was that this was such a quick turn-around that there was no time and there are no up-dated drawings of the increased size of the Boulevard Substation. It was a mutual agreement that SDG&E will request to be on the Agenda after they have filed their project and will be able to present a package with drawings of the project to the Group.

SDG& E said that they filed the application with the California Public Utilities Commission in December for an Emergency Shut-off Plan. We asked the Commission to review the Plan. A few new items were added to the Plan: adding more of the RAWS weather stations that measure the humidity and the moisture and the wind speed. These usually are placed on CAL FIRE property. Installing additional RAWS stations out to get more pinpoint accuracy because they realize that some areas have different conditions and that your reports from one RAWS station may not reflect the entire community. A decision from the Commission is expected in August. The Group was critical of the shut-off plan noting that the proposed mitigation measures; coordinating with Red Cross for a Care Center; placing an emergency generator at the Community Center; using the County's reverse 911 system; individual residences and/or livestock watering during potentially extended shut-offs.

The Boulevard Fire Department's May 15th Fish Fry fundraiser on May 15th and La Posta's Earth Day on May 16th was announced.

6. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM. Minutes submitted by Cheryl Lenz, Secretary.

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